

PRESS RELEASE

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Ebersole member named 2003 NJ Master Music Teacher

The New Jersey Music Education Association has named Curt Ebersole as the recipient of the 2003 Master Music Teacher Award. Ebersole studied at the Northwestern University School of Music, where he received a Bachelor of Music Education (1980) and Master of Music in Conducting (1981). He also received a Master of Fine Arts in Clarinet Performance from SUNY-Purchase, NY. The coveted award was formally presented at a ceremony on February 21, 2003, at the NJMEA State Convention in New Brunswick, New Jersey.

In 1982, Ebersole became the Director of Instrumental Music at Northern Valley Regional High School in Old Tappan, New Jersey. His predecessor, Dr. Dean Simpson, was an important mentor and friend, but he was also inspired and influenced by Dr. Otis D. Kitchen (Elizabethtown College), John P. Paynter and Dr. Mallory Thompson (Northwestern University), Larry Combs (Principal Clarinet, Chicago Symphony Orchestra) and Ben Armato (Clarinet, Metropolitan Opera Orchestra).

The commission of two works by Timothy Broege (also a graduate of the Northwestern School of Music) in 2000 has proved to be one of many high points of Ebersole's career at Northern Valley. *El Jardin de Esperanza*, for wind ensemble, and *The Garden of Hope*, for chamber ensemble and solo baritone voice, received their world premieres in 2001. These works are due to be published by Boosey & Hawkes as part of their Windependence Series. Another innovation at Northern Valley, developed from a concept originating at the Eastman School of Music, was the Prism Concert, a multi-media performance that has become an eagerly anticipated annual event. Ebersole also oversees a broad comprehensive music program for his students, which includes concert bands, marching band, orchestra, jazz band, chamber ensembles, musical theater and festival performance trips. Under his direction, his students have received many First Place and Superior awards at national music festivals in the United States, Canada, and the Bahamas. The musical theater productions that he has produced and conducted have received numerous nominations and awards from the Rising Star Awards Program of the Paper Mill Playhouse, including three awards for Outstanding Overall Production. In 1994, Ebersole received the Northern Valley District Teacher of the Year Award, and was subsequently named the Bergen County Teacher of the Year.

The Mayor and Council of Old Tappan recognized Ebersole's service to the community when they proclaimed June 21, 2002 as J. Curtis Ebersole Day. He annually provides complementary performances for area senior citizens, and prepares the Marching Band for two parades each Memorial Day in the local towns of Northern Valley.

Outside of the classroom, Ebersole is active as a guest conductor, adjudicator, clinician, and clarinetist throughout the northeast. As the Founding Coordinator of the Wind

Conducting Symposium of the Music Educators of Bergen County, Inc., he produced this teaching symposium from 1987 to 1994. During that time, he brought Dr. Mallory Thompson to serve as clinician, bringing her conducting expertise to local conductors and performing educators.

And what about the future? When asked, he said: "My goal is to continue to re-evaluate my program and methods each year, and continually come up with fresh ideas, so that I never begin to stagnate. I seek every day to challenge both my students and myself." It is an aspiration that anyone who knows Curt Ebersole will agree is good for many years to come.

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